

Fritz, Frank, and the boatswain sprang from their corners, and rushed to the door.

"The lightning struck quite close by/⁵ said Frank.

"At the crest of the cliff above us, most likely," replied John Block, going a few steps outside.

Susan and Dolly, who were always greatly affected by thunderstorms, as many people of nervous temperament are, had followed Jenny outside the cave.

"Well?" Dolly enquired.

"There is no danger, Dolly, dear," Frank answered. "Go back and close your eyes and ears."

But Jenny was just saying to her husband who had come up to her:

"What a smell of smoke, Fritz!"

"That's not surprising," said the boatswain.

"There is the fire—over there."

"Where?" Captain Gould asked sharply.

"On that heap of sea-weed at the foot of the cliff."

The lightning had set fire to the heap of dry weed. In a few minutes the flames had spread to the mass of sea-weeds collected at the base of the cliff. It burned up like straw, crackling in the breeze, eddying about like will-of-the-wisps, and spreading an acrid smoke over the whole beach.

Fortunately, the entrance to the cave

was clear,
and the fire could not reach it.